

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamaguchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,513,201) (hereinafter "Yamaguchi").

Claims 3-10, while objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended claim 3 to be rewritten in independent form in light of the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter. As a result, claim 1 has been canceled. The dependencies of the dependent claims have been amended to conform with this cancellation of claim 1. Accordingly, claims 2-10 are currently pending for consideration.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamaguchi. Claims 3-10, while objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claim 3 to be rewritten in independent form in light of the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter. As a result, claim 1 has been canceled. The dependencies of the dependent claims have been amended to conform with this cancellation of claim 1. Accordingly, newly-amended independent claim 3 of the instant application is in prima-facie condition for allowance. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully assert that dependent claims 2 and 4-10 are

allowable at least because of their dependence from newly-amended independent claim 3, and the reasons set forth above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

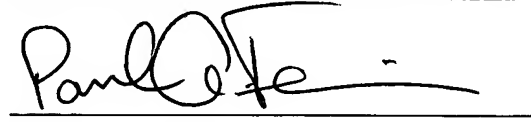
EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH LLP

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By:


Paul A. Fournier
Reg. No. 41,023

Customer No. 055694
DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH LLP
1500 K Street, N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005-1209
Tel.: (202) 842-8800
Fax: (202) 842-8465